

# Acts 29

*Christendom (AD 590-1517)*

## Introduction

When power and success become the focus of the church instead of sacrifice and service, the inevitable outcome is corruption and hypocrisy. The era when the church experienced the most worldly power its true character suffered the most.

## Discussion Questions

- It is critical to understand that even Jesus was tempted by the promise of worldly power and authority (Matt. 4:8-9; Luke 4:5-7). Why is this such a temptation? How do we struggle with this in our own day?
- As Christianity grew in influence and power, Christendom looked less like Christ and more like the rulers of this world (Matt. 20:25-28; John 13:12-17). What is the purpose of the church? What is the purpose of power?
- The inevitable conflict between kingdoms and values is always an issue in the world (John 16:33; 18:36). Sometimes our struggle is with confessing Christians, other times it can be with religious or secular views that are contrary to Christianity (2 Cor. 5:14-21; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Rom. 12:18-21). How are we to work out our differences? How does faithfulness to Jesus look in the face of hostility?
- Reformation and renewal always start with God's word (Josh. 1:8-9; 2 Kin. 22:8-23:24; Ezra 7; Neh. 9). As people search the Scriptures, they sometimes find a discrepancy between what is written and what is taught (Acts 17:11; Gal. 1:8-9; Rom. 16:17; John 5:39-40). Why is it important to read the Bible for yourself? Why are elders and other Christians important in this process as well?

## Think About It

We are to proclaim God's kingdom and not seek to build our own. Jesus commissions us as his ambassadors of his grace, not his wrath. The gospel is the power of God to change lives and the world.

## What Will You Do?

Look to Jesus as the prophet, priest, and king of our world. Submit to his authority, believe his words, and follow his example. Put your hope in his kingdom and not the kingdoms of man. Continue to pray for those in positions of influence and authority.

## Renewing Your Mind

*We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. (2 Cor. 5:20)*

*Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all... Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Rom. 12:17,21)*

*You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Pet. 2:9)*

*When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. (John 13:12-17)*

*First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 2:1-5)*

## Prayer Requests

